MARIES CHOISE.

With prayers written by the ſame Author.

By *Henrie Smith.*

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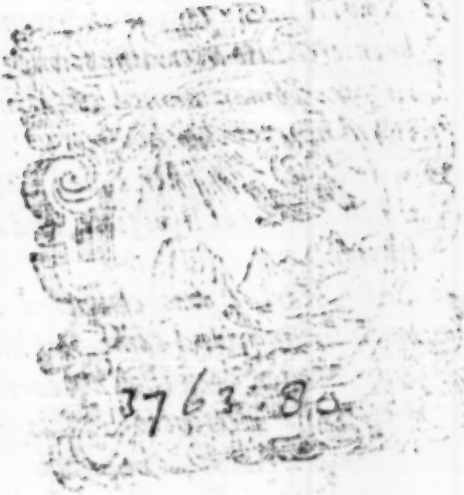
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MARIES CHOISE.

LVKE. 10. 38, 39, &c.

38 *Now it came to passe as they went, that he entered into a certaine towne, and a certaine woman named Martha, receiued him into her house.*

39 *And she had a sister called Marie, which also sate at Iesus feete, and heard his preaching.*

40 *But Martha was combered about much seruing, and came to him, and said, Master, doest thou not care, that my sister hath left me to serue alone? bid her therefore, that she helpe me.*

41 *And Iesus answered, and sayde vnto*

her, Martha, Martha, thou carest and art troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needfull, Marie hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken awaie from her.

AS Christ had shewed himselfe louing vnto Lazarus and his sisters, in rayſing him from the death of the body, and then from the death of the ſoule: ſo doe they heere ſhew their thankful minds to Christ againe, the one by receiuing him into hir houſe, and the other by entertaining him into hir heart. As he was God hee was receiued of Mary: as hee was man hee was receiued of Martha. They both deſired to entertaine our Sauiour as Iacob and Eſau deſired to pleaſe their aged father, but Mary made choiſe of the better part, and was preferred before hir ſiſter, as Iacob ſped ſooneſt of moſt dain-

tie

Iohn. 11.

Gen. 27.

tie Venison, and preuented his brother of the blessing. And although the care of Martha in the entertaining of Christ be not to be misliked; yet Maries diligence in hearing his doctrine is of purpose preferred, to teach vs, that it is much better with Marie to studie in the worde, and first to seeke the kingdom of God, then with Martha to labour in the worlde, and to neglect that heauenly kingdom. And yet notwithstanding, such is the corruption of this rustie age, that our greatest care is to prouide for this present life, as the rich man, Luk. 12. that enlarged his barnes wherein to put his store for many yeares: but we neuer or very late remember to prouide for the life to come, like that other rich man, Luk. 16. that neuer thought of heauen, till hee was tormented in the flames of hell. *Math. 6, 33*

In the 11. of Iohn, Christ is said to loue his whole familie; and heere he is said to come vnto them. For whom

he loueth he cannot chooſe but viſit,
Iob. 2. like the friends of Iob that came to
comfort him in his great aduerſitie,
yea and the greater loue hee beareth
vnto any, the oftner he will reſort vn-
to them, yea hee will come and dwell
Gen. 47. with them. Iohn. 14. 23. Like Iacob
that came downe into Egipt, to his
beloued ſonne Ioſeph, and dwelt in
Goſhen. But Chriſt is yet more kinde
Gen. 45. then Iacob was, for hee came not till
he was ſent for with horſes and Cha-
riots, but Chriſt came of his owne ac-
cord to this beloued familie. Thus
dooth he alwayes preuent vs with his
bleſſings: before hee was deſired hee
came into the world, hee called his
Apoſtles before they came to him,
and before he was requeſted he came
vnto this noble houſe. O happy houſe
that enterteyned ſuch a gueſt, but
thriſe happie inhabitants to whome
ſuch a gueſt woulde vouchſafe to
come! When hee came vnto the ſwi-
niſh Gadarenes, they deſired him to

depart

depart out of their coasts, preferring their Swine aboue their Sauiour: but this godly family receiued him into their house, preferring their God before their golde, and the health of their soules, before their worldlye wealth. They receiued him into their house, who had not a house wherein to put his head. Wherein their hospitalitie is commended, and shall certainely be rewarded at that dreadfull day: for with this and such like works of mercie, the Lord shall answere the sentence of iudgement, which is to be denounced against the wicked, that neuer exercised those workes of mercie, Let vs learne by their example to be harberous and giuen to hospitalitie, which is so often commended vnto vs in the Scripture, and shall bee so richly rewarded at the last day. Those godly Fathers Abraham and Lot, enterteyned Angels in the habite of strangers: So wee may dayly entertaine Christ Iesus in the habite of a poore

Luke. 8.

Matth. 8. 19

Matt. 25.

Gen. 18.
Gen. 19.

poore man, of a blinde man, of a lame man, and whatsoeuer is doone vnto any of these that are his members, he accompteth and accepteth as doone vnto himselfe. Now as this vertue of hospitalitie is commendable in all sorts of men: so is it more specially commended to the ministers, who are expressely commanded by the Apostle among other things, to bee giuen to hospitalitie. Vnto the Leuites in the time of the lawe, the Lorde appointed citties of refuge, to signifie that the Ministers house should bee the poore mans harbor, and his store their treasurie: but the true ministers of our dayes haue no citties of refuge for others, for they haue none for themselues: they haue not wherewith to releeue the wants of others, for they haue not to releeue theyr owne.

1. Tim. 3. 2

Num. 35.

When Martha had thus enterteyned Christ as hee was man into hir house, Marie began to enterteine him

as

as he was God into her heart, ſhee ſat at his feete to heare his preaching, for no ſooner was Chriſt come into the houſe, but that hee tooke occaſion to teach and inſtruct the family, and in ſteede of bodily food which they beſtowed vppon him, to giue vnto them the foode of the ſoule. Thus dooth he alwayes ſhew himſelfe a thankfull gueſt, into what houſe ſo euer hee entreth, he leaueth better things behind him then he findeth, hee loues not to be in Zacheus debt for his dinner, for *Luke. 19.* inſteed thereof he bringeth ſaluation to his houſe, neither dooth hee leaue his ſupper vnpaide for heere, for inſteed thereof hee beſtoweth vppon them a heauenly ſermon. This ſhould be the exerciſe of faithfull miniſters when they are inuited to great feaſts, that as they are called the ſalt of the earth, which ſerueth to ſeaſon the meates to make them ſauery, and preſerue them from putrifaction, ſo they ſhould ſeaſon the table talke with *Matth. 5. 13*

ſome

some godly conference, to minister grace vnto the hearers, Ephe. 4, 29.

These sisters were godly women, and both earnest fauourers of Iesus Christ, and yet in the manner of their deuotion there is such difference, that the worldly affection of the one may in some sort be misliked, in respect of the godly exercise and practise of the other: Martha is sore encumbred with much seruing, where a little seruice had beene sufficient: But Marie is attentiue to heare the worde of God which neuer can be heard sufficiently.

Matth. 5. *Luke. 4.* *Iohn. 8.* Marie sitteth to heare the word, as Christ vsed to sitte when he preached the word, to shew that the word is to bee preached and heard with a quiet minde. In a still night euery voyce is heard, and when the body is quiet, the minde most commonly is quiet also. But Martha is troubled with other affayres, and therefore vnfit to heare the word: as the ground that is

sun

surcharged with stones, or ouer- *Math. 5. 13.*
growne with weedes and thornes, is vnfit to receiue the seed, or yeeld any fruite to him that tilleth it. As often therefore as wee come to heare the word of God, wee must not come with distracted mindes, wee must not trouble our selues with the cares of this lyfe, which (as our sauiour saith) *Luke. 8. 14.*
are thornes to choake the worde, and to make it vnfruitfull. For as Moses *Exod. 3.*
was vnfit to talke with God till he had put off his shooes, and the blind man *Marke. 10.*
vnfitte to come to Christ till hee had throwne away his cloake, so we must thinke our selues vnfit to heare the word, and vnapt for euery heauenly exercise, til we haue put off our shoes, that is, our worldly cogitations and affections, and till we haue cast away our cloake, that is, all lets and impediments which might hinder vs from profiting in our profession.

When our mindes are quiet, we are *Luke. 2.*
fitte to deale with heauenly matters,

there-

therefore the Doctors conferred sitting in the Temple: and God delighteth to deale with vs when wee are
Gen.18. moſt priuate: hee appeared to Abraham ſitting in the doore of his Tent.
Acts.2. The holy Ghoſt came downe vpon the Apoſtles, and filled all the houſe
Acts.8. where they were ſitting. The Eunuch ſitting in his charret, was called and conuerted by Philips preaching.

Marie ſat at Ieſus feete, yet ſat ſhee not ſleeping as many ſit at the Preachers feete, but ſhee ſate at Chriſt his feete and heard his worde. As Paul
Acts.22. was brought vp at the feete of Gamaleell, and was perfectly inſtructed in the law of the Fathers.

Hir humilitie is commended, in that ſhe ſat at Ieſus feete, to ſhew that the word is to bee heard with all humilitie: hir diligence and earneſtnes appeareth, in that ſhee would not depart to helpe hir ſiſter, to ſignifie that the hearing of the word muſt be preferred before worldly buſineſſe.

Hir

Hir diligence and humilitie, ſerueth to condemne our negligence, and contempt of Chriſt and his word: we doo not ſit at Chriſt his feete, nay we rather ſet Chriſt at our feet, when wee are ſo negligent in hearing of his worde.

Wee are as ſlowe to come to the Church, as the Rauen was to come to the Arke, and as loth to ſpend any time in the ſeruice of God, as Pharao was loth to let the Iſraelites goe to ſerue the Lord. If a commoditie were to bee ſeene whereout ſome profit might ariſe, how carefull would wee be to procure it? what paines would wee take to get it? Abſalon was not more deſirous of a kingdome, then the rich men of our time are deſirous of golden gaine. But if it bee a matter of coſte or trouble, if they cannot heare the worde preached without ſome hinderance to their worldlye buſineſſe, and ſome extraordinarie charge to their purſſe, then like the

Gen.8.

Exod.8.32.

2.Sam.15.

Gada-

Luke.8. Gadarenes, they are content to take
Matt.13.45 their leaue of Christ and his worde, and had rather loose that heauenly Pearle, then they would parte from their earthly pelfe.

Thus in Christ wee haue the patterne of a good Pastor, and in Marie the patterne of a good hearer: Let Ministers learne by his example, to
2.Tim.4.2. take all occasions to preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season, and let Christians learne by hir
Matth.6. example, first to seeke the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse, and then to prouide for the things of this lyfe.

While Marie was carefull for the foode of the soule, Martha was curious to prouide foode for the bodie, hir greatest care was to enterteyne Christ and to make him good cheere, to testifie hir thankfull minde vnto him that had doone so great things for them, hee had raysed hir brother Lazarus from death to life, therefore he

hee was worthye to bee well enter- 1. *King.* 17.
teyned.

If Elias deſerued to bee well dealt withall at the hande of his hoſteſſe, whoſe ſonne he had reſtored to life: 2. *King.* 4.
or Elyſa deſerued ſuch enterteyne-ment for hir ſonnes reuiuing; then ſurelie our Sauiour Chriſt was wor-thie to be welcome hither, where hee had rayſed Lazarus out of his graue, wherein hee had lyne by the ſpace of foure dayes before. It was well doone *Iohn.* 11.
therefore of Martha to ſhewe hir thankefull minde vnto Chriſt, but it was not well doone at that time to ſhewe her ſelfe thankefull in that manner, it was then time to heare the worde: for at that time Chriſt preached the worde, it was no time for hir to ſpende that time in other affayres, and to neglect the greateſt affaire, the meanes of hir owne ſal-uation.

It was not vnlawfull for Martha to labour, no more then it was vnlaw-

full for Peter to sleepe, but when Christ was preaching, it was no time for hir to bee so busie in seruing, no more then it was time for Peter to sleepe when Christ willed him so earnestly to watch and praye. When Christ preached out of Symons ship to the people that stoode vppon the shore, it was no time for Peter to play the Fisherman. But when Christ had left speaking and commanded him to launch into the deepe, then it was time for Peter to let downe the net. There is a time wherein we ought to labour in our vocation, and a time wherein we ought to heare the word, and as we may not vtterly neglect our lawfull callings, to followe sermons, so must wee not bestow the Sabaoth which is consecrated to the seruice of God, in following the workes of our vocation. All things haue their appointed time (saith the wise man) Eccle. 3. and euery thing is seemely in his conuenient season; but when

Matth. 26.

Luke. 5.

Eccle. 3.

thing

things are doone prepoſterouſly and out of order, there followeth confuſion.

Although Martha did not heare Chriſt, yet did ſhe labour for Chriſt: many in our dayes will neyther labour for Chriſt, nor heare of Chriſt, but as the Iſraelites were wearye of their iourney in the wilderneſſe, and lothed that heauenly Manna, ſo theſe men are wearie of euery godly exerciſe, and are ſoone cloyed with the word of God. The fiue fooliſh Virgins waſted their Oyle to no purpoſe, and while they went to buie, were excluded the marriage, and theſe fooliſh men ſpende this time of grace vainely and wantonly, as though after this life there were no time of iuſtice and vengeance to be feared. The daye ſerueth for their pride or profit, the night is ſpent in ſporte and pleaſure, and no time is left to heare the worde. When wee are praying they are playing; when we are preaching

Num. 21.

Matth. 25.

they are eating and drinking, like the old world, that eate and dranke, that marryed wiues, and gaue in mariage while Noah was preparing the Arke, for the sauing of his housholde. And as Baals Priests wounded themselues to serue their Idoll, so these men take dangerous courses, and strangely trouble themselues to serue the diuell.

Gen. 6. Luke. 17. Hebr. 11. 1. King. 18.

Nowe Martha findeth hir selfe agreeued, and begins to enuie hir sisters exercise, as Iosephs brethren enuyed him for his dreames, and the sonnes of Ishai that disdained theyr brother Dauid for his forwardnesse in the combat with Goliath.

Gen. 37. 1. Sam. 17.

These two sisters, that in other things agreed so well togither, in this doo differ so much, that Christ must haue the hearing of the matter, and decide the controuersie; Martha plaieth the Plaintife and accuseth hir sister; Marye the defendant, answereth by hir Aduocate, and Christ himselfe that

that tooke vppon him the office of an Aduocate, is become the Iudge, and giueth sentence on Maryes side; Martha complaineth of hir sisters slothfulnesse, and seemeth after a sorte to blame our Sauiour for winking at it, requiring him to see the matter redressed speedily. But Christ first reproueth Marthaes curiositie, and then excuseth, yea and commendeth Maries care. In Martha it appeareth howe willing wee are to please our selues in our owne conceits, and how ready to conceiue amisse of others dooings, yea sometime to prefer our owne defects, before the perfections of other men. If Dauid chasten his soule with fasting, it shall bee turned to his reproofe; if hee put on Sackcloth to testifie his contrition, they iest at him, and the drunkards make songs of him: if Iohn Baptist be temperate in his apparrell and dyet, they will say hee hath a diuell. If Paul answere discreetely for himselfe, he shall

Psal. 69.

Luk. 7. 33.

Acts. 25

bee charged to bee mad with ouer-
much learning; yea if our Sauiour
Luke.7. 34. Christ himselfe frequent the compa-
nie of sinners, to reclaime them from
sinne, they will not sticke to call him
a friend and companion of Publi-
cans and sinners. Among vs, if there
be any that be more forward in religi-
on then the rest, and more diligent to
heare the worde, as Marie was, there
shall not want some or other to cen-
sure them at their pleasure, yea to
finde faulte and to condemne them
for so doing: yet are not the godly to
bee discouraged herewith, or to desist
from theyr godly exercises: for as the
Lorde answered for Mary when shee
held hir peace; so the Lorde will de-
fend their cause, and take their part a-
gainst their aduersaries. The Lorde
cannot abide to heare his seruants ill
spoken off, but is alwayes ready to
mainteine their right, and to answere
Gen 31. 24. for them. He will not suffer Laban to
speake an ill worde to his seruant Ia-
cob.

cob. And if Aaron and Myriam murmure againſt Moiſes, the Lorde will puniſh it with leproſie, what a comfortable thing is this to the godly, that the king of kings will take their parts, and will not ſuffer them to ſuſteyne any wrong. Hee is a moſt ſure and truſtie friend, that will not abide his friend to bee backbited or ill ſpoken of, but eyther hee will anſwere in their defence, or hee will finde ſome meanes to ſtop the mouthes, and reſtraine the ſlanderous toungs of their enemies, as ſomtime he ſtopt Balaams paſſage, when hee went to curſe his people, and cauſed the dumbe beaſt to ſpeake, and to reprooue the madneſſe of the Prophet, rather then he woulde haue his people to bee curſed. Num. 12. Num. 22 2. Pet. 2. 15

The repitition of Marthaes name, argueth the vehemencie and earneſtneſſe of this admonition. The Lord is faine to be very earneſt and importunate with vs, before hee can reclaime

Gen. 22 vs. So when God ſpake vnto Abraham, hee calleth him twiſe by name; Chriſt called Peter thriſe by name, Iohn. 21. to cauſe him make his threefould confeſſion, to make amends for his threefold deniall. And when the 1. Sam. 3. Lorde ſpake vnto Samuel, hee called him foure ſeuerall times by name before hee anſwered; for ſuch is the great mercie of GOD, that he is content to admoniſh vs often of our dutie, and ſuch is the dulneſſe and peruerſeneſſe of our crooked nature, that wee cannot bee gayned by the firſt admonition: but the Lord muſt call vs often and earneſtly, before we will harken vnto him.

There are two things in this ſpeach of Chriſt to be obſerued. The firſt is his modeſt reprehenſion, of Marthaes immoderate care: the other is, his friendly defence of Maries choiſe.

Though Martha was very carefull to entertaine Chriſt in the beſt manner, yet if he perceiue any thing in hir wor-

worthie of reprehenſion, he will not ſtick to tell hir of it: he will not ſooth hir in hir ſaying, nor ſmooth hir in hir owne conceit, for all the trouble and coſt that ſhe beſtowes vpon him. If we be often inuited to ſome mans table, and kindely enterteyned, it would bee vnkindlye taken, if wee ſhould finde fault with any diſorder, but foraſmuch as all Chriſt his actions are the inſtructions of Chriſtians, therefore euery Chriſtian, but eſpecially Preachers, whome it more ſpecially concerneth, muſt learne by this example how to behaue themſelues, when they are inuited to great feaſts: namely to ſpeake their conſcience freely when they ſee a fault. The beſt requitall that wee can make for our good cheere, is to giue good counſell and wholſome admonition to them that inuite vs. When Chriſt dined with the Phariſey, Luke. 11. and was miſliked for not waſhing before dinner, hee tooke occaſion to reprooue

their

their hypocrisie, their outward show of holinesse, which was the sinne of the Pharises: and at another time he noteth them, for preasing to the chiefe places at banquets, and sheweth what modestie is to bee obserued in sitting downe to meate, and what guests should be bidden to our table. So should Preachers behaue themselues towards those that inuite them to great feasts, where they see perhaps some fault or disorder, either in the Maister of the house, or in some other of the guests; to saye vnto them thus or otherwise, as the case requireth: I will warne you of one thing that will doo you good, that you would leaue your vsurie and extortion, your couetousnesse and oppression, that you would leaue your swearing and blaspheming the name of God, that you would forbeare to prophane the Lords Sabaoth, that you would leaue your pride and excesse in your dyet and apparrell: that you would forbeare

Luke. 14.

beare to speake ill of any behind their backes, or to beare any malice or hatred to any of your neighbors. These are the faults which are easie to be espyed almost in euery place, and these are the faultes which the faythfull minister of Christ Iesus should not leaue vnreprooued whereseoeuer he commeth, but as Elias tould Ahab of his Idolatrie, though hee were his king, and Iohn Baptist tould Herod of his adulterie, though he did many things for him, and heard him gladly: so should the preacher reproue the people for their notorious offences, notwithstanding some fauours and curtesies receiued from them.

1. King. 18.

Math. 14
Mark. 6. 20

If Christ had cause to finde faulte with Martha for hir too much diligence in his enterteinement, it seemes hee was not curious of his dyet, but would haue beene content with simple cates: he was no delicate or daintie gueſt, hee did not affect or delight in sumptuous banquets, or costly fare,

he

he rather requireth a religious heart, a
Luke.11.28. constant faith, a willing mind to heare the word, with an earnest care to liue thereafter. These are the things wherin the Lorde delighteth, these are the iuncates which hee desireth, and which he preferreth before all earthly cheere. Thus is Martha reprehended for hir curiositie: now let vs see how Marie is excused and commended for hir godly care. One thing is necessary (saith Christ) and what is that one thing? euen to heare the
Rom.1.16. word preached, which is the power of God to saluation, to euery one that beleeueth. A man may better want all things then that one needful thing, and yet we desire all other things, and neglect that one thing which is so needfull. This one thing hath Marie chosen; and therefore hath chosen the better part. Marthaes part is good bicause it prouideth for this present life: but Maries part is better, bicause it leadeth to eternall life. It is good

to

to be occupyed about our calling, to get our liuing: but it is better to bee occupied in hearing the word, which is able to ſaue our ſoules. As the head and the foot are both needfull in the body, ſo Marie and Martha are both needfull in a commonwealth: man hath two vocations, the one earthlye by his labour, the other heauenly by his prayer. There is the actiue life, which conſiſteth in practiſing the affayres of this life, wherein man ſheweth himſelfe to bee like himſelfe, and there is the contemplatiue life, which conſiſteth in the meditation of diuine and heauenly things, wherein man ſheweth himſelfe to bee like the Angels: for they which labour in their temporall vocations, do liue like men; but they which labour in ſpirituall matters, liue like Angels: When they heare the word; God ſpeaketh vnto them: when they pray, they ſpeake vnto God; ſo that there is a continual conference betweene God and them,

bicauſe

bicause they are continually exercised in hearing or praying.

Christ loued Martha for hir hospitalitie, as Isaac loued Esau for his Venison. So did he loue Mary for hir diligence in hearing his word, as Rebecca loued Iacob for harkning to hir voice. A nurse which hath hir brest full of milke, doth loue the child that sucks it from hir: and Christ which hath his brest full of heauenly milke, is glad when he hath children to suck the same. Let vs therfore (as the Apostle willeth vs, 1. Pet. 2. 1. 2) laying aside all maliciousnesse, and all guile, and dissimulation, and enuie, and all euill speaking; as new borne babes desire that sincere milke of the worde; that we may grow thereby to bee perfect men in Christ Iesus: let vs breath after the fountaine of liuing water, which springeth vp vnto eternall life, as the faintie Hart desireth the water brook to quench his thirst, and forasmuch as many things are so troublesome, and,

Gen. 25, 28.

1. Pet. 2. 1. 2.

Psal. 42, 1.

one

one thing is so needefull, let vs seeke that one needfull thing, the end of all things, euen to feare God and keepe his commandements, which we must learne by hearing the word of God, whereby faith (without the which it is impossible to please God) is begotten & nourished in the hearts of men. *Eccl.12,13.* *Heb.11.6.* *Rom.10.17*

This is that good part which Marie hath chosen, by so much better then hir sisters choise, bicause it concerneth a better life, and hath the fruition of this present life. Mary hath a double portion: She heard the word; and eate of the meate, which hir sister dressed, for godlinesse hath the promise of this life, & of the life to come. *1.Tim.4.8.* As for all other things, whether they be honors, promotions, pleasures, and what not, they serue onely for the maintenance of this present lyfe, which is so short, and subiect to mutabilitie: but the word of God is the foode of the soule, the bread of life, that immortall seede which bringeth *1.Pet.1,23*

foorth

foorth fruite vnto eternall life. Let the worde of God therefore be precious vnto vs, becauſe it is ſo permanent, for heauen and earth muſt paſſe, but the worde of God endureth for euer. If we make choiſe of any thing beſide, it muſt be taken from vs, or we ſhal be taken from it: but if we make choiſe of this one thing, it ſhall neuer bee taken from vs neither in this world nor in the world to come. The Lord grant that wee be not only hearers but doers of the word, that it may be truly ſayd of vs, as Chriſt ſaid of his diſciples, that heard his preaching, Behold my brother, my ſiſter, and mother: or as hee anſwered the woman that commended his carnall kindred; *Bleſſed are they that heare the word of God, and keepe the ſame.*

Luk. 21, 33

1. Pet. 1, 25

Iames. 1, 22.

Math. 12, 50

Luk. 11, 28.

FINIS.

A Godly Prayer, to bee ſaid at *all times.*

BEcauſe I haue ſinned ô Lord, and doone wickedly in thy ſight, and prouoked thee to anger by my abhominable wickednes, making my bodie which thou haſt ordained a veſſell for thine honor, an inſtrument to moſt deteſtable filthines, ô Lord be merciful vnto me, and pardon mee this great wickednes: looke not vpon mee good father, with the eyes of iuſtice, neither do thou drawe againſt me the ſword of iudgement, for then how ſhall I that am but duſt, ſtand in thy preſence, when thy wrathfull indignation commeth foorth as a whirlewind, and thy heauie diſpleaſure as a mightie tempeſt: ſeeing the earth trembleth, the depths are diſcouered, and the verie heauens are ſhaken when thou art angrie? Exerciſe not therefore thy furie againſt me, that am but as chaffe before the winde, and as ſtubble againſt a flaming fire: though I haue ſinned grieuouſlie in thy ſight, preferring my wicked deſire, before thy holy commandement: eſteeming the pleaſure of a moment, before eternall and euerlaſting ioyes: nay, which is worſe, making more account of vileneſſe and vanitie, and extreame folly, and madnes, then

of the glory and maiesty of the most excellent, wonderfull, and blessed God, nothing dreading his displeasure, whose wrath maketh the diuels to quake, and burneth vnquenchable vnto the bottomlesse pit of hell; whose might is so great, that by the breath of his nosthrils he is able in the twinkling of an eye to destroy a thousand worlds: yet am I bold, prostrating my selfe before the throne of thy maiestie, heartily to beseech, and humblie to entreate thee, that thou wilt not deale with me according to my merites, for I haue deserued that thou shouldst raine downe fire and brimstone from out of heauen vpon me to deuour me, or to open the earth vnderneath me, to swallow me vp quick vnto hell: but thou art gratious and full of compassion, and rich in mercies, therefore do men put their trust vnder the shadow of thy wings. I haue none in heauen to flie vnto but thee, nor in earth, of whom I may receiue any comfort, but at thy fauourable hands, which are stretched out day and night, to receiue all that by earnest repentance turne vnto thee, being readie to ease all those that are laden with the burthen of their sinne, and to refresh their distressed consciences. In the multitude of thy mercies I approche vnto thee ô Lord, desiring thee to looke downe from the height of thy sanctuarie, vppon me poore and wretched sinner, and to wipe away mine offences,

fences, and to blotte out my misdeedes, especiallie this my vngratious, vncleane, and vngodlye act, that it may not come vppe in remembrance with thee, nor bee imputed to mee for euer, for 'thy sonnes sake ô Lorde, in whome thou art well pleased, in whom thou wast fully satisfied vppon the crosse for my sinnes: graunt mee free pardon and remission of that I haue so foolishlie by my exceeding frailtie, committed against thee in this shamefull deed. But ô thou my vncleane and vnthankfull soule! my vngodly and rebellious heart! what did I sinfull wretch, and execrable caitife, so blindlie and desperatlie attempt? Howe art thou become quite senceleſſe, that thou wast so readie to anger thy most louing God, and to prouoke thy most mightie indge, that thou mightest satisfie thy filthie flesh, suborned both by thine and Gods moste malitious aduersarie, to grieue and vex the spirit of the Lord, and to damne thy selfe for euer? Hath not God of his singular fauour, made the heauens of old, and placed the sunne and moone in them, two glorious lights, with innumerable starres, a wonderfull workmanship for thy vse and benefit? Hath hee not lifted vp the clouds by his strong arme, and heaped treasures of raigne, haile, and snow, to doe thee seruice? Hath hee not in the midst of the world, laid the foundations of the earth, that

thou mighteſt haue a ſtable habitation, and mighteſt from thence behold euery way, thou lookeſt the walles of his beautifull pallace. Hath hee not gathered the waters into one place, and made the drie land appeare, and drawne foorth by his powre a pure ſubſtance of aire betweene heauen and earth, that fiſhes might multiplie in the ſeas, foules in great aboundance, flie in the open face of the firmament, tender plants, hearbs, flowers, and trees in all varietie, growe and fructifie vpon the ground: yea creeping things, cattell and beaſts increaſe in infinite number, in paſtures, fields, gardens, orchards, and groues; and all theſe to doe thee pleaſure? Hath he not further giuen thee ſprings and riuers, gold and ſiluer, pearles and iewels; euen plentie of ſtreames, ſtones, and mettall, to furniſh thee with whatſoeuer for profite thou needeſt, or for pleaſure deſireſt? Hath hee not made thee Lord and ruler ouer all his craatures, euen ouer the huge Elephants, the Whale, the ſtrong Lion, and Vnicorne, and horſe of warre? ouer the ſauage Tigars, Beares, and Wolues? ouer the mightie Eagle, Griffin, Vultur, Oſtrich, and Haulke? Art thou not clad and defended, fed and enriched, cheered and renowned by theſe his creatures, and that all the partes of thy bodie, and ſences of thy minde might be partakers of his goodnes, and with his ſweetnes refreſhed, com-

comforted & delighted in great meaſure? Yea aboue all this, hath hee not breathed into thy bodie an immortall ſoule, that thou mighteſt remaine with him in glorie for euer? Did hee not at the firſt frame thee like vnto himſelfe, that he might therefore loue thee as his ſonne? Did hee not caſt into thy ſpirit the beames of his wiſedome, that thou through thy vnderſtanding mighteſt behold him and his glory, and ſtirred vp ſparkes of goodnes in thy heart, that thou mighteſt by thy affection imbrace him and his bountie, and bee made perfectly bleſſed by his infinite happineſſe, who when Adam thy vngratefull father by diſtruſting him that had faithfully promiſed, was throughlie able to fulfill his will, and reſolutely determined, exceedingly to aduance him, hauing giuen him this whole worlde in teſtimonie thereof, by diſcontenting his minde with the excellent eſtate he was placed in of vnſpeakeable loue, vnleſſe he might be as good as God himſelfe, proudly deſiring to make duſt the fellow of him who was from euerlaſting, infinitely full of wiſedome, power, grace and maieſtie, and had doone all this at the perſwaſion of the moſt traiterous rebell of his right gratious king, & ſpitefull enemie of his moſt bountifull maſter, euen then when this moſt villanous conſpiring with Gods notorious aduerſarie, had deſerued immortall hatred againſt

him, and all that pertained vnto him: yea thee as yet vnborne, but contained in him, whose whole masse by this impious disobedience became by iust iudgement a temple of cursed estate for euer, and for euer: thou also thy selfe bringing foorth fruite of contempt of his law, who is most holy, mercifull and mightie: yet euen then I say, of vnspeakeable pittie and compassion intended, nay promised, nay laboured to deliuer him & thee from that dreadfull vengeance which yee had purchased by your owne wicked and vngratious demerits, and to reconcile you base abiects and vile cast awayes, and yet stubborne and spightfull haters of the great God Iehouah, who when there was no meanes to bee found in heauen, nor seas, nor in the earth, nor vnder the earth, but that he should damne his onely begotten sonne, the verie brightnes of his glorie, who neuer offended him, but was an eternall delight vnto his soule, and reioycing vnto his spirit, that thou mightest be saued, a grosse lumpe of slime and clay, still vexing him by thy wickednes; yet deliuered his sonne into the full power of Sathan, to put him to a most shameful death, by the hands of most detestable persons, and did cast him farre away out of his fauour, and threw him downe into the bottomlesse pit of his vnsupportable wrath and indignation, that thou mightest be placed between

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his owne armes in the kingdome of heauen, in all roialtie and glorie, as his deere and entirely beloued ſonne. Whie therfore waſt thou ô my vnholy and vnthankfull nature, ſo readie and prone, ſo violent and headlong to commit things highly diſpleaſant in his ſight, who in a manner, and as farre as it was poſſible, ſhewe himſelfe for thy ſafetie, when he had no creature ſo diſobedient vnto him as thee? O thou my inward ſoule, and ſpirite of my minde awake, and ſtand vp to defend thy ſelfe, for thou art beſieged with mightie enimies, the prince of darkneſſe, the rulers of the aire, the ſpirituall craftineſſe and pollicies of hell! why ariſeſt thou not thou ſluggard? thy foes in great number are prepared with manie ambuſhments, hauing a huge armie all maliciouſlie bent, with venemous dartes to pearce thorowe thy heart: they are entred thy hold, at all fiue gates of thy outward ſences: yea they haue broken downe thy inward doores, and haue left thee but one windowe towardes heauen to eſcape by, euen thy praiers, whereto the ſpirit of God waighteth thy ſpeedie comming: make haſt ô thou heauie with ſleepe, or thou art taken by thy cruell enimies, whoſe handes are of iron, and their teeth of ſteele, to grinde thy verye bones to powder: harken no longer to that ſtinking harlot, thy wicked appetite, which lying in thy boſome, deſireth nothing but thy

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vtter deſtruction; ſhee perſwadeth thee that thou art in no preſent danger, that ſhe may reioyce at thy miſerable end. It may bee thou thinkeſt ô thou chiefe of fooles, and Oxe that art fed to the ſlaughter, that though thou goe on a little way in thy pleaſant path, thou maiſt returne backe when thou wilt, and thy little wandring wil not greatly be regarded. O thou vnwiſe and ſottiſh of heart! when wilt thou vnderſtand? Hath the ſonne of God indured ſuch paine for the ſmalleſt of thy ſinnes, and makeſt thou ſo light account of ſo grieuous crimes? Dooth the lawe thunder curſes, and plagues, and euerlaſting torments againſt thy leaſt vnordinate motions, and didſt thou not dread to performe ſo ſhameleſſe a practiſe? Knoweſt thou not that the eyes of God, and his Angels behold the dooing that thou wouldeſt be aſhamed to doe in the preſence of vngodly men, or vncleane beaſts? or doeſt thou not conſider how thou diddeſt grieue the ſpirite of God, who hath vouchſafed of his infinite mercie, to dwell in thy bodie to this end, chieflye that hee might mortifie thy carnall luſts? Why didſt thou then defile his temple, which hee hath ſanctified to bee an houſe for himſelfe to dwell in? take heed thou driue not out ſo worthie and noble a gueſt, by ſuch ſwiniſh and fleſhly behauiour, who if he once depart, then ſhalt thou be an hold for diuels, and

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legions of damned ſpirites, that they may ſtuffe thee full of all manner of iniquitie, and then at length become pitch and Brimſtone, to maintaine the fire of Gods ſcorching wrath in thy ſinewes, ſpirits, and inward bowels, drinking out in full meaſure the dregs of the wine of his rage and fury: and canſt thou be ſo blind and retchleſſe, that for the vaine pleaſure of ſinne for a little while, thou wilt conſtraine God to torment the euerlaſtingly, who it may be euen at this inſtant, if thou wilt ſtill trie his patience and long ſufferance, will ſodainly take thy ſpirite from thee, or come in iudgement to recompence to all ſinners by his finall ſentence in the burning of the whole world, the ſtipend of horror, ſhame, confuſion, and vtter reprobation: & waigh with thy ſelfe, that to approach to God is the chiefeſt ioy of the choſen; to behold his glorious countenance in the face of his ſonne, whereas thy ſinnes do ſeparate thee from him, and make thee afraide to ſpeake to him by prayers, which is thy chiefeſt and greateſt ſolace in this mortal life. How much more will thy vngodlines make thee wiſh delay of the laſt iudgement, the ſpeedie and preſent comming whereof is a chiefe proppe of our fight, in the midſt of ſo manie troubles and temptations: and withall, remember how the diuell that roring lion laboreth by this impure act, to make thee moſt filthie & lothſome

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in the ſight of God, and reioyceth to ſee thy gracious father, mercifull Sauiour, and comfortable ſanctifier, ſo abuſed and withſtood, and angered by thee whom he hath wonderfully made, carefully preſerued, and deerely redeemed, and tenderlie loued, that if it may bee thou ſhouldeſt by vtter apoſtaſie, diſhonour him in the face of the world, who hath aduanced thee in the preſence of all his Angels: and though thou be ſo ſure in faith that thou canſt not vtterly fall (the conſideration whereof ſhould make thee more dutifull, and not incourage thee in a ſinfull courſe) yet maiſt thou by little and little, and by often falling, bring thy ſelfe into a better liking, both of the wicked, & of wickednes it ſelfe, whom thou oughteſt to hate with a perfect hatred, & then God by iuſt iudgement, caſt thee into a ſure ſleepe, that thy filthineſſe may be ſeene of men, and thou condemned to the griefe of the righteous, and ſcorned to the ſhame of the vngodly, and in the meane ſeaſon, by prouoking Gods iudgment, be ſpoiled of thy goodly ornaměts: of thy godly deſires, of religious thoughts, of zealous affections, of chriſtian communication, of holy indeuours, of aſſured perſwaſions of faith, of ſtedfaſt waitings through hope; of conſtant ſuffering by patience, and heartie reioyſings from loue. In the perfect conſummation of which things, becauſe al happines conſiſteth,

ſiſteth, beware thou careleſſe wretch, leaſt ſodainly by thy abhominable filthineſſe, thou either for a time wholy depriue thy ſelfe of comfortable feeling of theſe things, or much diminiſh thy preſent graces and bleſſings receiued of the holy ſpirit, to the glorie of God the Father. But why doe I vtter my voice, or ſtriue to make a dead carkas moue? ô quicken thou me that art the fountaine of life, and call thou out of heauen thy dwelling place, that my wandring ſoule may heare the voice of hir ſhepheard, and followe thee whither ſoeuer thou leadeſt: nay of thy tender compaſſion take me vp vpon thy ſhoulders, and carrie mee gentlie into thy fold again: for theeues haue ſtolne me away, & haue bound my feete ſo that I cannot go, and they watch for me vntil thou art gone, that they may carrie me away quick from thy paſtures: ô do thou therefore preſently deliuer me, and giue me thy helping hand: ô caſt thou downe by thy ſpirit my raging luſt, and by thy grace ſubdue mine vntamed affection. I am weake ô Lorde, and vnable to reſiſt the force of my mightie aduerſarie: ſende thy helpe from aboue, and ſaue mee out of the iawes of the cruell Lion: thou haſt deliuered me out of the mouth of hell; ô let not the gates thereof anie more preuaile againſt mee: let mee not anye longer bee occupyed in vngodlineſſe, leaſt mine enimie triumph ouer mee, ſaying

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in his malicious heart, there, there, ſo would I haue it. Let this ſinne be farre from me ô Lord, that I ſhould defile my ſelfe anie more with this notorious wickedneſſe: worke therefore in mine heart an vtter deteſtation of it, that I may euer hereafter keepe my ſelfe pure and vnſpotted for thy kingdom, Thou that art able to make of ſtones children to Abraham, mollifie I pray thee my ſtonie heart, that all manner of ſonne like affections may bee imprinted therein: plucke vp ô good father theſe rootes of bitterneſſe, that no vnſauorie fruite may come of the tree, which thou by thine owne hand haſt planted. I deſire, I looke, I call, I crie, for thy aſſiſtance, that I may conquer this vnruly motion. O bleſſed ſauiour, that haſt granted ſo manie petitions vppon earth, to them that were carefull for the bodie: fulfill I pray thee, this my deſire; not for health, nor ſtrength, nor riches, nor honour, nor for food, nor apparell, but for thine heauenlie grace and inſpiration: yea let mee loſe all thoſe, rather then be left to my ſinfull fleſh, that I ſhould be ruled anie longer thereby. Mortifie good father in me the old bodie of ſinne, and giue vnto me a new bodie, purged from theſe dead works to ſerue the liuing God: renew my ſpirit dayly, that I may caſt away theſe workes of darkneſſe: let it be enough ô mercifull Father, that my weakneſſe in failing heeretofore, hath

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chaſed, ſo mightely, ſo gratiouſlie, and ſo dearlie for vs: we beleeue and know, that one drop of his bloud, is ſufficient to heale our infirmities, pardon our iniquities, and ſupplie our neceſſities, but without thy grace, our light, our ſtrength, our guide, we are able to do nothing, but ſinne, as wofull experience hath taught vs too long, and the example of them which are voide thereof, whoſe life is nothing elſe but the ſeruice of the world, the fleſh and the diuell. Therefore good father, as thou in ſpeciall fauour haſt appointed vs to ſerue thee, like as thou haſt ordained all other creatures to ſerue vs: ſo may it pleaſe thee to ſend downe thy heauenly ſpirit into this earthly manſion, to illuminate our mindes, mollifie our hearts, change our affections, ſubdue our reaſon; regenerate our wils, and purifie our nature to this dutie; ſo ſhall not thy benefits, nor thy chaſtiſments, nor thy word returne voide, but accompliſh that for the which they were ſent, vntill we be renued to the image of thy ſonne. Good Lord we beſeech thee, looke downe in the multitude of thy compaſſions, vppon thy militant Church, this ſinfull Realme, thy gratious Handmaide our dread Soueraigne, her Honourable Counſell, the ciuill Magiſtrates, the paynefull Miniſters, the two Vniuerſities, the people that ſit in darkeneſſe, and all that beare thy croſſe. Gather vs into one communion

munion of thy truth, and giue vnto euerie man a ſpirit to his calling, that we being mindfull of the accompt, and that wee are called Chriſtians, may firmely reſolue, ſpeedely begin, and continually perſeuer in dooing and ſuffering thy holy will. Good Lord bleſſe and ſanctifie our meeting, that no temptation hinder me in ſpeaking, nor them in hearing, but that thy word may be heard and ſpoken as the word of God, which is able to ſaue our ſoules in that day, howſoeuer it pleaſeth thee by weake and fooliſh things to magnifie thy ſelfe. There is no cauſe ô God moſt iuſt, why thou ſhouldeſt heare ſinners, which art diſpleaſed with ſinne, but for his ſake which ſuffered for ſinne, and ſinned not: in whoſe name we are bold to lift vp our hearts, hands, and voices vnto thee, praying as he hath taught vs: *Our Father which art in heauen, &c.*

FINIS.